

SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger

Twitter @rsnbrgr

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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GENERAL JOHN KENNETH CANNON, USAF

21 JUL 1988

John Kenneth Cannon was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, March 9, 1892. He was graduated from Utah Agricultural College in 1914, and on November 27, 1917, was appointed a second lieutenant in the Infantry Reserve. His first service was with the 24th Machine Gun Battalion at Camp Fremont, California, followed by tours of duty at Camp Mills, New York, and Camp Lee, Virginia.

General Cannon was stationed for a time in San Francisco, California, and, before his honorable discharge in September, 1919, served as professor of military science and tactics in the public schools of his home town. On July, 1, 1920, he was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Regular Army and two months later was assigned to the 32nd Infantry at the Presidio of San Francisco, California. He transferred to the 24th Infantry at Camp Furlong, New Mexico, in November, 1920, and served there until the following April when he was attached to the Air Corps.

General Cannon then entered the Air Service Pilots School, was graduated in December, 1921, and entered the Air Service Pursuit School. After completing the pursuit course in June, 1922, he transferred from the Infantry to the Air Corps and was appointed Director of Flying at the newly-formed Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas.

In January, 1925, General Cannon went to Luke Field, Hawaii, for duty with the Sixth Pursuit Squadron. He became operations officer of the Fifth Composite Group at that station in March, 1926. Two years later he was assigned as commanding officer of the 94th Pursuit Squadron at Selfridge Field, Michigan. In January, 1929, he began a short course at the Flying Instructors School at Kelly Field, after which he became Director of Pursuit Training at the Air Corps Advanced Flying School. In August, 1931, he became Director of Flying at the Air Corps Primary Flying School and Director of Training at the Air Corps Training Center at Randolph Field, Texas.

General Cannon entered the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, in August, 1935. He was graduated in June, 1936, and enrolled in the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, from which he was graduated a year later. He then was assigned to duty at March Field, California.

In June, 1938, General Cannon went to Buenos Aires, Argentina where he served for three years as chief of the U.S. Military Mission to Argentina. In October, 1941, General Cannon became chief of staff of the First Air Force at Mitchel Field, New York. The following February he was appointed commanding general of the First Interceptor Command there, and in September, 1942, was given an unannounced overseas assignment. In November, 1942, he commanded the 12th Air Support Command in support of the Western Task Force during the invasion of French Morocco, North Africa, with amphibious landings at Fedala, Port Lyautey and Safi. A month later he became commanding general of the 12th Bomber Command, with headquarters at Constantine, Algeria.

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During March and April, 1943, General Cannon organized an air training command for the Mediterranean theater. In May, 1943, he became deputy commander of the Allied Tactical Air Force for the Sicilian campaign and the invasion of Italy. In December, 1943, he assumed command of the U.S. 12th Air Force and the Mediterranean Allied Tactical Air Force and was responsible for all air operations for the invasion of Southern France, in August, 1944. In March, 1945, he was appointed Air Commander-in-Chief for all Allied Air Forces in the Mediterranean theater. In May, 1945, he became commanding general of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

In April, 1946, General Cannon assumed command of Air Training Command at Barksdale Field, Louisiana. On October 15, 1948, he resumed command of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe, and was designated Commander-in-Chief of the USAF in Europe, in March, 1950.

General Cannon was appointed commanding general of Tactical Air Command at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, in October, 1950.

General Cannon has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal with two Clusters, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, and Air Medal. His foreign decorations include the Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of the British Empire, Commander of the Legion of Honor, Croix de Guerre with Palm, Order of the Red Star (First Class), Military Order of Virtuti Militari, Commander of the National Order of the Southern Cross, Grand Officer of the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus, Grand Officer of the Order of Ouissam Alouite, and Grand Officer of the Order of Aeronautical Merit.

He is rated a command pilot, aircraft observer, and combat observer.

PROMOTIONS

He was promoted to captain (permanent) August 8, 1929; to major (temporary) March 16, 1935; to major (permanent) October 1, 1938; to lieutenant colonel ((temporary) March 11, 1940; to lieutenant colonel (permanent) February 4, 1941; to colonel (temporary) January 9, 1941; to brigadier general (temporary) February 27, 1942; to major general (temporary) June 2, 1943; to lieutenant general ((temporary) March 17, 1945; to brigadier general (permanent) March 3, 1946; to major general (permanent) April 13, 1946; to general (temporary) October 29, 1951.

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Up to date as of 31 October 1951